kallu. There is, further, a platform, made of bricks and mud, called mandhe kallu, whereon the Badagas, when not working, sit at ease. In their folk-tales men seated thereon are made to give information concerning the approach of strangers to the village. Strangers, who are not Badagas, are called Holeya. The Rev. G. Richter gives* Badaga Holeya as a division of the lowly Holeyas, who came to Coorg from the Mysore country. In front of the houses, the operations of drying and threshing grain are carried out. The cattle are kept in stone kraals, or covered sheds close to the habitations, and the litter is kept till it is knee or waist deep, and then carried away as manure for the Badaga's land, or planters' estates.

"Nobody," it has been said,† "can beat the Badaga at making mother earth produce to her utmost capacity, unless it be a Chinese gardener. To-day we see a portion of the hill side covered with rocks and boulders. The Badagas become possessed of this scene of chaos, and turn out into the place in hundreds, reducing it, in a few weeks, to neat order. The unwieldy boulders, having been rolled aside, serve their purpose by being turned into a wall to keep out cattle, etc. The soil is pounded and worried until it becomes amenable to reason, and next we see a green crop running in waves over the surface. The Badagas are the most progressive of all the hill tribes, and always willing to test any new method of cultivation, or new crops brought to their notice by the Nilgiri Horticultural Society."

Writing in 1832, Harkness states‡ that "on leaving his house in the morning the Burgher pays his adoration

* Manual of Coorg. † Pioneer, 4th October 1907.

‡ Description of a singular Aboriginal Race inhabiting the summit of the Neilgherry Hills.

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

175
512 to the god of day, proceeds to the tu-el or yard, in
782 which the cattle have been confined, and, again addressing the sun as the emblem of Siva, asks his blessing,
(233) and liberates the herd. He allows the cattle to stray about in the neighbourhood of the village, on a piece of ground which is always kept for this purpose, and, having performed his morning ablutions, commences the milking. This is also preceded by further salutations and praises to the sun. On entering the house in the evening, the Burgher addresses the lamp, now the only light, or visible emblem of the deity. 'Thou, creator of this and of all worlds, the greatest of the great, who art with us, as well in the mountain as in the wilderness, who keepeth the wreaths that adorn the head from fading, who guardeth the foot from the thorn, God, among a hundred, may we be prosperous.'"

241 The Badaga understands the rotation of crops well.
• 242 On his land he cultivates bearded wheat (beer ganji), barley, onions, garlic, potatoes, kīrē (*Amarantus*), sāmai (*Panicum miliare*), tenai (*Setaria italica*), etc.

562 "Among the Badagas," Mr. Natesa Sastri writes, "the position of the women is somewhat different from
(462) what it is among most peoples. Every Badaga has a few acres to cultivate, but he does not mainly occupy himself with them, for his wife does all the out-door farm work, while he is engaged otherwise in earning something in hard cash. To a Badaga, therefore, his
(465) wife is his capital. Her labour in the field is considered to be worth one rupee per day, while an average male
(464) Badaga earns merely three annas. A Badaga woman, who has not her own acres to cultivate, finds work on
(262) some other lands. She thus works hard for her husband and family, and is quite content with the coarsest

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

178 staple grains to grow marketable vegetables for cash instead.[18] Whether their diet had improved is not clear. By the Second World 241 War a mere 3% of the entire Nilgiri population subsisted primarily (433) on millets; the other 97% depended on purchased rice (Krishnaswami, 1947, 464). Coffee was not a successful crop in most parts of the plateau, and much of that plantation land was later given over (245) to tea. This, together with the development of Badaga tea plantations from about 1925 onward, accounts for the great increase in tea acreage over the thirty-five year period covered in Table 2 (Ranga, 1934, 18–22).

The plantation crops called for more expertise than Badagas 245 could usually muster and so were mostly confined to European land-holdings; even so, some Badagas were growing tea and a (240) little coffee in the late 1920s (Ranga, 1934, 2). But potato was (654) relatively easy to cultivate, especially as a government farm in the district helped them with seed, fertilizers and technical advice. During the past fifty years some of the more enterprising Badagas (mainly those able to obtain financial credit) have successfully cultivated tea and coffee on estates both large and small, though this was initially a ruse of theirs to increase the value of their land before selling it to Europeans.[19]

• 242 Chemical fertilizers were first used sporadically in the early (241) 1920s; before that only cow-dung and human refuse had been available (Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 44; Grigg, 1880, 468; Ranga, 1934, 14). These chemicals led to much higher yields in the European vegetable crops and helped confirm the belief that growing food for the market was a profitable occupation. Improved seeds, notably potato, and insecticides were also adopted by the Badagas (Nambiar, 1965, 23), who were 'always willing to test any new method of cultivation, or new crops brought to their notice by the Nilgiri Horticultural Society' (Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 76, quoting from *Pioneer*, 4 Oct. 1907).

241 The adoption of fertilizer, insecticide and good seed was soon 242 followed by construction of more terraces on some of the sloping fields. Progress in terracing, however, was much slower than the adoption of other innovations because it demanded a greater capital outlay than many farmers could afford; and most did not possess more than a quarter-hectare of land. Even today some cultivated slopes that badly need terracing because of soil erosion (650) remain unterraced. It is worth noting that in the past several decades the situation has much improved because of the state

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

government's making loans available on relatively easy terms for terrace construction (Grigg, 1880, 470; Ranga, 1934, 12–13).

As a result of terracing in many places and minute subdivision elsewhere, fields are usually so small that it has become inefficient, if not impossible, to plough them (Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249). For over forty years therefore the plough and oxen have rarely been seen on the plateau (Ranga, 1934, 12–13; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249; Noble, 1968, 144–145; see below, p. 167, n. 11). Much of the work load formerly carried by oxen is now taken by cheap migrant labourers from the plains; men work for daily wages of three rupees (equivalent to 40 cts. U.S.), and women for two (1970).

While the profits from potato, tea and coffee are very much higher per hectare than those from the traditional grain crops, the risks are also much greater. Not only does a farmer need ready cash to buy seed or cuttings, fertilizer and labour, but reserve cash is needed to feed his family should disease ruin the crop one season. Here the co-operative societies set up under state government guidance have helped Badagas somewhat, but less than might be expected. Short-term loans are available against land securities for all members of a society,[20] and long-term loans are obtainable from the Land Mortgage Bank (established in 1937).

Before the appearance of these facilities the money-lender (a Tamilian Chettiar, a northern Marwari or a Moslem) was an ominous figure in the lives of many Badagas; for some he still is. Early in the present century the monthly interest on his loans ranged from 3% to 12.5% of the principal, but though these rates were quite extortionate loans were in general repaid (Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 64; Madras, 1928, 55; Ranga, 1934, 4). In the previous century not even these loan facilities were accessible to Badagas: they could only borrow from wealthy Badagas, preferably those related to the borrower by marriage but living in a village at some discreet distance from him. No interest was charged on such loans then.

The first Badaga co-operative society was formed at Kereha:da in 1911, the 'Kerhada Rice Rural Credit Society', named in reference to Mr. S. P. Rice, a former Collector who had initiated interest in the co-operative movement. At that time annual interest rates varied between 24% and 75% of the principal. By 1918 there were eighteen such societies, and by 1927 the plateau had fifty-four agricultural credit societies from which Badagas could get loans

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

By now the Badaga Christians were viewed as a separate caste, and the old antagonism over Christian conversion had given place to a new realism which accepted the British, tolerated their religion and sought to collaborate with them in the realms of commerce and administration. The periodic massacres of Kurumbas had also come to an end.

Land fragmentation and indebtedness continued to be problems for the twentieth-century farmer, but new techniques of commercial cultivation raised the per capita income appreciably. Chemical fertilizers and insecticides were now used, along with good seed and reputable tea cuttings. Money-lenders, middlemen and truckers all appeared on the scene to answer local needs. Most of the hillsides were terraced to permit efficient farming, and the emergence of co-operative societies from 1911 helped with this as well as with the more general problem of rural credit.

These new directions in the farm economy were fully in evidence by 1930, at which time most Badagas broke off their time-honoured exchange relationship with the Kotas, Todas and Kurumbas and began to seek the artifacts these tribesmen had made in town markets instead. The ostensible reasons for this break are several. Badagas usually mention the increasing cost of having a Kota band at their ceremonies; while Kotas mention an insulting article in a national newspaper of 1923, 'The Hindu', which implied that Kotas were descended from the unions of Todas with Badagas.[3] A glance at the population graph in Appendix 2, however, will make it clear that the over-riding reason for the break must have been the disproportionately large number of Badagas. By 1931 there were 42,500 of them, too many to be adequately supplied in the customary way by a few hundred Todas and Kotas.

The Second World War brought a further surge in the demand for potatoes to feed the European troops stationed throughout south and southeast Asia; at the same time government financing helped the growers, with the result that this new capital and the high prices potatoes were fetching greatly alleviated the former indebtedness of Badagas. After 1957 potato production fell sharply with a series of disease-ridden crops, and tea, first planted by Badagas some thirty years before, now became a popular cash-crop too. By 1970 cabbage had also become an important crop.

Modern Badagas enjoy a high standard of living, occupy comfortable tiled houses, send their sons to college, make frequent

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

population is increasing, and that the position of the Badaga has materially improved. I notice especially the facts that they are now tiling their houses, that their women and children earn money on the tea and coffee estates, and that they buy rāgi and grain from the low country, and get a better market for their straw and cattle. They wear jewels of gold and silver, saved from their earnings'; quoted by Grigg, 1880, 34. This contrasts with the situation at the start of the British occupation of the hills, when the Badagas were so few in proportion to the land available that there was no need for crop rotation, as fields could be left fallow for years at a time; Mackworth, 1823, 124–126.

3. Emeneau, 1946, 265. Ranga, 1934, 4, reports that around 1930, 'In addition to this heavy expenditure upon funerals, more than three hundred Badagas cease work for more than two days and live at the expense of the relatives of the deceased or the people of the village. The expenses of a funeral incurred by all the Badagas in a hamlet come to more than Rs. 600. To add to this, their European employers lose their confidence in the ability of these people for regular service, since they cease work without giving any notice whatever . . .'; similarly Metz, 1864, 89–90.

[p. 246 is blank]

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AN50 Badaga AN50

But no great change has come in salt-giving and the other important rituals of either the Badagas or the Todas. Indeed, only one general change is apparent in recent performances of the traditional ceremonies: they are done with a minimum of wasted time. Now that Badagas and even some Todas have become involved in the marketing economy, they have less time to spend idly, since time now means income. They tend to perform ritual acts with some haste, and they do not always feel concerned if a minor item in the ritual sequence is altogether omitted from a particular performance. Public opinion still favors as authentic a performance as possible, however, for the relationship between the continued performance of the rituals and the continuance of the social order is even today believed to be a real and crucial one.

Wallace's contention that rituals do not have an information function has, we hope, been qualified by this paper. The kind of information which a ritual such as salt-giving presents is information not available from any other source, whether mass media or traditional oral channels. Neither government nor gossip can reassure a community on the matter of its continued existence as a community; only the periodic re-enactment of roles and the reassertion of traditional values in the indigenous ceremonies of a culture can give Badagas, Todas, and other rural communities the security of knowing that their own particular way of life is both persistent and worthwhile.

NOTES

1. I am indebted to the American Institute of Indian Studies for a fellowship which enabled me to do field research there in 1962-63. The present paper has been written with the help of a grant from the Chancellor's Committee on International and Comparative Studies, University of California at Los Angeles. I am also grateful to M. N. Thesingh, a Badaga Lingayat who provided much of the material, and to John Hitchcock for his helpful criticism.

2. Terracing of slopes and the fragmentation of fields through divided inheritance have resulted, since the 1930s, in fields being too small to plough.

3. Numbering 85,463 persons in the 1961 Census.

4. During the past fifty years some hamlets have included the salt-giving ceremony in their sowing festival. This is convenient because it saves some time and expense on preparations; yet the two ceremonies remain quite distinct from one another.

5. Large groups of Badagas and Kotas used to go together to the market town of Gundlupet in southern Mysore, or to Karamadai, near Coimbatore. They carried hay, honey, opium, and clarified butter with them, and bartered these for salt, crude sugar, rice, coconut, tobacco, and trinkets.

6. Initially trade in the Ootacamund bazaar was handled through barter, but by about 1840 cash had become the general medium.

7. Called *'uppu kuk'ke*, "salt basket," this is made of cane by the Todas, stands about nine inches high (including the loop handle), and is smeared inside and out with cow dung.

8. The term *'kubbe* is used for six species of Leguminosae found at varying altitudes on the Nilgiri Hills. These are (1) the hill forest indigo; (2) the New Spain senna; (3) the tick trefoil; (4) the bell pea or Chinese pagoda tree; (5) *Dumasia villosa;* and (6) mountain downy senna.

9. Otherwise known as bastard mango or honeysweet tree.

S: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1989
AN50 Badaga AN50

CHAPTER VI

SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In this and the chapter which follows we shall be concerned with the socio-cultural changes that have occurred in the period since 1913, (the year we have chosen as marking the break between the traditional and the monetary economy).

Agriculture

Until around 1860-65 the Badagas not only cultivated fields lying close to the hamlets, but also practiced shifting slash-and-burn cultivation in the wooded areas (Grigg 1880: 321). After the British land settlement of 1881-1884 this practice was completely stopped. By the year 1913 most Badaga households were cultivating their own land within a mile of their homes. The land was generally hilly and always unirrigated. The best fields lay in the valley flats, not so much because of the proximity of stream-water as because there was rich top-soil on these flats. Badagas recognized these differences in soils and terrain, both when choosing where to plant their crops and when dividing up the paternal inheritance. Soil distinctions were important, but distance from the hamlet could be yet more significant. Lands were therefore categorized by Badagas primarily as being close to the hamlet (within ¼ mile), distant from it, or in jungle clearings (Francis 1908: 165; Ranga 1934: 11-14). The first type of land received much of the cattle manure and all of the human refuse; the more distant land received little manure of any des-

118 just as much as the potato had. For our study of change it is significant that tea,
241 coffee and cinchona, like the potato, presuppose a market beyond the Nilgiris. The plantation crops called for more expertise than Badagas could usually manage, and so were largely confined to European land-holdings; even so, some Badagas were
(657) growing tea in the late 1920's. But potatoes were relatively easy for Badagas to grow, especially as a government farm in the District helped them with seeds, fertilizers and advice. During the past 40 years some of the more enterprising Badagas have also successfully managed to cultivate tea and coffee in areas both small and large:

(249) > The cultivation of tea by Badagas is increasing very rapidly. The fact that the value of land rises after tea is planted plays an important part in the popularisation of tea growing... In the Salarda valley, there is a Badaga woman who is developing seed-beds of tea on quite a large scale and there are many Badagas who are cultivating excellent nurseries. (Ranga 1934: 18-19)

241 Chemical fertilizers were first used by a few Badagas in the early 1920's;
242 before that only cow-dung and human refuse had been available (Grigg 1880: 468; Ranga 1934: 14). The use of these new chemicals was of great importance, for it led to much higher yields in the new vegetable crops and so helped confirm Badagas in the belief that growing food for the market was a really profitable occupation. Insecticides and improved seeds, particularly potatoes, were also willingly accepted by the growers.

241 Improvements in the areas of fertilizer, insecticide and seed were followed almost immediately by the construction of terraces on some of the sloping fields. Progress in terracing was much slower than in the adoption of the other innovations, however, because it demanded a much greater capital outlay than most farmers could afford (Grigg 1880: 470). Even today many cultivated slopes that badly need terracing because of soil erosion still remain to be terraced. In the past few years the situation

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Socio-Cultural Changes

121 We are now at the point where the nature of change among Badagas needs to be described in broader outline, so that it may be compared with the patterns of change documented in other parts of India. As in the preceding chapters, we shall confine our interest to changes which have occurred since 1913.

177 The cultural adjustments that Badagas have made to a changing Indian economy have relied heavily on their adoption and adaptation of alien customs and techniques. Social changes among the Badagas have been similar to changes elsewhere in India, but have at the same time been worked out independently by the Badagas to suit their own peculiar situation.

177 178 (241) Agricultural change during recent decades occurred after Badagas, no longer permitted to clear new land in the jungles, opted to reap the rich fruits of a cash market in need of fresh vegetables, and later of tea and coffee. The community was never coerced into making this important change; but because the people did choose to enter this new kind of economic relationship with non-Badagas, they (242) became involved in a long string of connected cultural changes. To succeed in growing a cash crop -- and success was imperative if people were not to starve -- the Badagas were obliged to learn new ideas about seed fertility, chemical fertilizers, terracing, and field lay-out; they had to adopt new types of tool, and discard

177 178 (242) the traditional ox-drawn plow (Ranga 1934: 11); and as a result of these technological changes Badagas had to develop new kinds of laboring patterns, involving contractors and non-Badaga workers. A whole nexus of new social relationships emerged: foodstuffs had to be bought in shops, cash had to be borrowed wherever it might be had, agents and middlemen had to be sought out and dealt with, lowland laborers had to be employed, European planters and government farming advisers had to be consulted, educated opinion had to be sought out.

178 648 (241) In the early years of this century a new way of life was being developed by the Badaga farmers. It was a way of life in which they could readily perceive that certain elements from the traditional culture were no longer practicable. The close and important tie with the Kotas was a case in point: Badagas often did not grow the millet crops they were customarily expected to give to the Kotas, and the rising grain prices led to a situation where traditional Kota products could be obtained much more cheaply by purchase in a bazaar. Finally, around the year 1928, relations with the Kotas were formally broken off by a majority of Badagas.

178 (554) (177) The initial change in agricultural practices led to other kinds of sociocultural change, too. These stemmed primarily from the fact that the Badagas were successful in their new ventures, and as a consequence were making cash profits on a scale never previously possible. New avenues for spending opened up, and new consumer goods appeared in the Badaga hamlets. Those who could find more land to buy did so: this is a familiar theme among the nouveaux riches of rural India (cf. Epstein 1962: 85 ff.). But not very much land has changed hands in this century, and few new areas have been opened up for farming recently. Profits have therefore necessarily been invested in other ways: large new houses have been built, watches, radios and other consumer goods have been brought into the

(454) (554)

342
346
352
353
251
241

Figure 23. Occupance forms constructed by Wynaad Badagas and Paniyas

AW50 Badaga AW50
Irula AW53
Kota AW55
Kurumba AW56
Toda AW60

T 234 (361) (434) [178]

sacred buffaloes is processed in several grades of dairy-temples located within hamlets and dairy-temple centers some distance away. Clarified butter (ghee), the end product of milk processing, is sold to earn income for families and dairy-temple priests. Nowadays, a few Todas are turning to agriculture.

I Ku- 361 433

While Irulas inhabit hamlets, Kurumbas occupy hamlets, semi-nucleated communities, and dispersed houses. In the past both groups depended upon garden produce and shifting slash-burn agriculture alternated with gathering, hunting, and trapping activities. Besides providing music and selling or bartering gathered products and artifacts, the Kurumbas have also obtained income from their neighbors

I Ku 433 434 463

by acting as doctors, sorcerers, and performers of agricultural ritual to ensure abundant harvests from Badaga crops. Irulas obtain additional income by supplying gathered products and artifacts to neighbors. Certain Irula families obtain fees for rituals performed by male members who are priests.

B Ko 241 [177]

Badagas and Kotas living in hamlets or villages on the upper Nilgiris maintain kitchen gardens near their homes. They once used plows in shifting slash-burn agriculture. In this century they stopped using plows and turned increasingly from cultivation of millets to commercial potato production. After Badagas and Kotas were forced to use only assigned lands and shifting slash-burn agriculture became an impossibility, they cultivated plots alternately on their

B Ko (242)

own holdings. However, the tendency now is toward intensive, sustained land utilization aided by applications of chemical fertilizers and insecticides. Kotas have varied from Badagas in being professional

B Ko 463